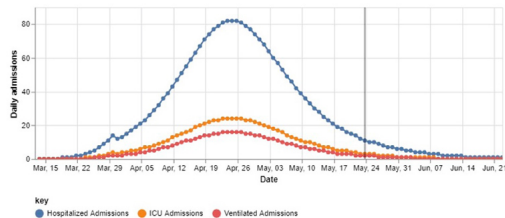


Navajo Nation's early response has helped cut COVID-19 spread

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 05 June 2020 06:23

Navajo Area IHS
Updated Surge Plan as of May 23, 2020

This is an updated review of the predicted surge in NAIHS Federal facilities, including actual inpatient and ICU admissions as well as transfers to tertiary centers.



This projection model shows the daily admissions expected at the NAIHS Federal facilities during the surge time-period. This represents 35% social distancing.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer announced May 26 that their early efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 dating back to January are beginning to show signs of success.

Well in advance of the first confirmed case of COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation, the Nez-Lizer Administration took proactive measures, issuing public warnings dating back to January, issuing travel advisories and restrictions for employees and citizens, implementing stay-at-home orders, holding town halls and conducting daily and weekend curfews.

“Everything that we have implemented has been data-driven and based on the advice and recommendations from health care and medical experts. It’s been effective and it is working to flatten the curve in certain areas and we are working hard to make sure the daily numbers begin to decrease consistently,” Nez said.

“Now is not the time to let up. We have to continue wearing masks in public, practicing social distancing, and complying with the stay-at-home order and daily curfew. New data from other states show that relaxing curfews and stay-at-home orders are having serious consequences,” he pointed out. “In some areas, when states have reopened, their numbers of new cases increased. We must remain diligent and prepared.”

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Recent data and new surge projections provided by the Navajo Area Indian Health Service May 24, indicate that the COVID-19 surge peak for IHS hospitalizations, including ICU admissions and ventilations occurred from April 21 to April 26 – an entire month earlier than initial surge projections on March 27.

“I am very pleased to see that the COVID-19 surge peak passed last month. Navajo people have done a tremendous job in answering our call to protect our elders,” Lizer said.

“Yes, our numbers are increasing due to increasing testing and improvements in testing result turnaround time ... We are hearing about potential second and third waves of infection. For Navajo people this tells us that we are not out of the woods yet. We must keep up our fight against COVID-19,” he added.